

Fee season now in effect in Delaware State Parks

DOVER – DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation reminds visitors to Delaware's state parks that entrance fees are back in effect, being collected through Nov. 30, 2017.

Revenue generated from park entrance fees is used to manage 16 state parks and more than 26,000 acres of state park lands. Delaware's state parks are primarily self-funded, with 65 percent of revenue to operate and maintain the parks generated by park users. The revenue is used for trail maintenance, environmental and recreational programs, visitor amenities, guarded beaches, management of campgrounds, cabins and more.

The entrance fees remain unchanged from last year. However the annual pass has a new look. For the first time, the passes will adhere to the outside of the windshield. "So many of our park visitors had difficulty removing the pass, and tinted windows made it challenging for fee booth attendants and park rangers to see the pass," said Division Park Administrator Mary Voshell. "It was time for the Division to move the pass to the outside of the windshields."

Daily park entrance fees for vehicles registered in Delaware are \$4 at inland parks and \$5 at ocean parks. Fees for out-of-state vehicles are \$8 at inland parks and \$10 at ocean parks.

Where fee attendants are not on duty, visitors should deposit the daily fee in the self-registration envelopes provided at park entrances and place them in the designated secured drop boxes.

"Staff in the DNREC Division of Parks & Recreation understand the significance of each person paying a park entrance fee to support the operation and maintenance of the parks," said Ray Bivens, director of the Division of Parks & Recreation. "It's

especially rewarding to be recognized as the 2016-17 National Gold Medal Award winner for excellence in the field of park and recreation management, a reflection of our parks staff's commitment to providing quality customer service to park visitors."

Annual passes are a convenient way to access the parks for the entire fee season. "For just \$35, Delaware residents can enjoy unlimited park visits to get their children outdoors and visit the parks with friends and family," Bivens added. "I want to thank all those who support our efforts to preserve and protect open space, improve services and expand recreational opportunities."

For individuals 62 and older with Delaware license plates, annual passes cost \$18. Seniors with an out-of-state registered vehicle pay \$35. A \$65 Lifetime Pass is available for Delawareans 65 and older. Reduced rates are also offered to Delawareans who receive public assistance, are active duty military or veterans. Active duty military personnel with an out-of-state license plate can purchase an annual pass at the in-state rate. Please visit www.destateparks.com for further information and requirements.

In addition, the new Corporate Pass program offers participating businesses, nonprofits and other groups discounted annual passes for their employees. "These passes give employers a way to promote health and wellness in the workplace, while providing employees with a benefit they can feel good about," said Bivens. For more information or to purchase corporate passes please contact Caroline Foltz at caroline.foltz@delaware.gov.

Vehicle entrance fees are charged at the following state parks: Alapocas Run, Bellevue, Brandywine Creek, Cape Henlopen, Beach Plum Island Nature Preserve, Delaware Seashore, Fenwick Island, Fort DuPont, Fox Point, Holts Landing, Killens Pond, Lums Pond, Trap Pond, and White Clay

Creek. The Brandywine Zoo and Fort Delaware charge individual fees to enter the zoo and ride the ferry to Fort Delaware.

Parks officials remind customers that annual passes and surf fishing permits can be purchased online to save time when they visit a park during fee season. "Many times park visitors wait until they visit a park before purchasing their season pass, but this can take extra time away from enjoying the park," Voshell added. "By purchasing the pass online, park visitors avoid the lines at the park offices."

Annual park passes may be purchased online at www.destateparks.com, at all park offices, at DNREC's main office in the Richardson & Robbins building at 89 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901, and at six retail locations.

For more information visit:
<http://www.destateparks.com/fees/passes/index.asp>

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